

Kickapoo Valley Reserve Update

A quarterly publication highlighting education, property management & events on the KVR

Plant Wisdom by Ben Johnston KVR Staff

A Green Dragon.....Pete had a green dragon. I don't recall any reference to Puff's color, yet we do know he was from Honahlee. Albi is green but has become more so a rainbow dragon, I'd reckon. Smaug.... definitely not green. And then there was apparently a 2001 film of the same name featuring Patrick Swayze and Forest Whitaker. And who knew, the Internet tells me that there is an alcoholic beverage involving cannabis, conveniently called a Green Dragon. Gotta love the Internet.

On the natural side of life, Green Dragon is the common name for a shaded wetland, floodplain forest plant, of which the botanists have named *Arisaema dracontium*. The plant grows to about 2 feet in height and has one curving, compound leaf, with 7 to 15 leaflets. The flower is quite similar to everyone's favorite, or the more common *Arisaema*, Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*A. triphyllum*). However, the green dragon's spathe (i.e. "Jack") is long, thin, and wispy, extending vertically well beyond the spadix ("pulpit"), resembling, so they say, a dragon's tongue. (Note: The included picture shows the spathe, brown and droopy; obviously past its prime). Both plants produce red berries. Plants related to the Green Dragon (Family Araceae) include Skunk Cabbage, Water-arum (*Calla palustris*), and 3 species of duckweeds (*Lemna* spp.) among others.

Ranking an "8" on the Coefficient of Conservatism, Green Dragon is the newest plant to be added to the KVR plant list. Not a new plant, just newly discovered for the KVR by Abbie Church of Mississippi Valley Conservancy.

Another addition to the plant list from 2019 is Spring-cress (*Cardamine bulbosa*; C value = 6), a wetland plant and proud member of the Mustard Family (Brassicaceae).

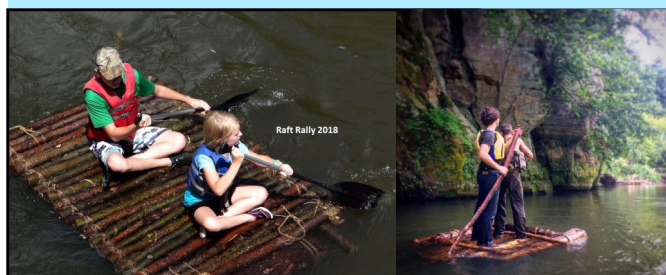
Somewhat related, plant walks in the KVR have discussed and identified 80+ plants within the 0.5 mile route we follow. The next walks are August 3, September 14 and October 12; all starting from the south gate of Old 131, 9am. Tell a buddy and bring a friend.

[Renew your 2019 Annual Pass](#)



Green dragon plant

Friends of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve will be hosting the Rustic Raft Rally on July 27th. Those interested in building a raft for the event should contact jackie.yocum@wisconsin.gov or call the Visitor Center 608-625-2960 in advance. All are welcome at this free event!



What's happening on the KVR!



June 24 - 28-NEW! Art Sprouts 9am-2:30pm

July 1 - Dam Challenge Registration Open

July 4 - KVR Friends Reception & Old 131 Trail Open to Vehicle Traffic 12-4 pm

July 7 - Apollo 11 Celebration 8-10PM

July 8-12 - Jeepers Creepers—8:30-11:30am

July 8-12 - Jeepers Creepers 12:30-3:30pm

July 8-12 - Nature Nuts 9am-2:30pm

July 15-19 - Nature Nuts 9am-2:30pm

July 18 - KRMB Mtg. 7 pm (tentative)

July 20-21 - A Journey Down the Kickapoo

July 22-26 - NEW! Plant Power! 9am-3pm

July 22-26 -NEW! Art Sprouts 9am-2:30pm

July 26-29 - NEW! Leadership Camp: Wilderness Base Camp 9am drop off—3pm pickup

July 27th - KVR Friends Rustic Raft Rally

July 29-Aug.2 - Junior Naturalist 9am-2:30pm

Aug.3 - Plant Identification Hike 9am

Aug.5-9 - Junior Naturalist 9am-2:30pm

Aug.5-9 - Wilderness Adventure Camp 9am-3pm (overnight August 8)

Aug. 8 - Education & Tourism Mtg. 5:30pm

Aug.12-16 - NEW! Plant Power! 9am-3pm

Aug. 15 - KRMB Mtg. 7:30 pm

Aug. 21-24 - Leadership Camp: Wilderness Trail Camp 9am drop off—3pm pickup

Sept. 14 - Plant Identification Hike 9am

Sept. 14 - Turkey Season Opens

Sept. 18 - *Driftless Dialogue*: TBD—6:30PM

Looking for more details? <http://kvr.state.wi.us/>



Appreciation of Place through Personal Storytelling: A Journey Down the Kickapoo

Saturday July 20 - Sunday July 21

Join us as we venture into the art and tradition of oral storytelling. This two day outing will allow participants to share stories that tell of their past experiences in the natural world and create new stories while we paddle down the river. Participants will build community and storytelling skills while spending two days on the river (with one camping night) and intermittent stops along the way for reflection and connection with the "Kickapoo Muse". Active storytelling exercises will be used to connect participants to the natural world around them. The words of John Muir, Walt Whitman, Terry Tempest Williams and Mary Oliver will be among the guides that spur this adventure. Beginner to advanced paddlers with riders and campers welcome.

Specifics: Saturday, departure from Bridge 10 at 9am. Overnight camp at Bridge 14 (P West) . Arrive at Landing 20 (Hwy 82) in La Farge on Sunday by 3pm. The Merry Green Marvel Bus will be based at Bridge 14 for group camping and community camp kitchen. Participants will bring a bag lunch for the first day. Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast will be prepared and provided at the Bridge 14 camp spot. Participants will make their Sunday bag lunch at breakfast. What to bring: personal gear for camping and paddling. (There are sleeping accommodations available on the Merry Green Marvel Sleeper Coach

Bus: <https://www.merrygreenmarvel.org/>. Or you may also opt to bring a tent or use one of the tents available.) The bus contains a full camp kitchen that we'll set up to cook and serve meals.

Instructor: Steve Lawless is a long time experiential educator. Steve has an M.A. in Education and has taught in many settings including as a traditional writing and literature teacher, on Native American reservations, farm schools, alternative middle and high schools and a Waldorf school. From his nearly thirty years of teaching, Steve has an infectious enthusiasm for taking learning outside the classroom.



Cost: \$100/person, add \$35 if you need a canoe. Ages 15 and up. Minimum 10 persons, Maximum 14 persons. REGISTER

Save the Date!

October 5th, 2019: Dam Challenge Triathlon

The Kickapoo Valley Reserve Dam Challenge Triathlon - canoe, bike, run - challenges participants to compete among the rugged hills of scenic southwestern Wisconsin's rural countryside and the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Proceeds from this event benefit the Kickapoo Valley Education Program

Registration opens July 1, 2019!

Small Business Recovery and Resiliency - La Farge

A great deal has been written about the devastating floods that hit the Kickapoo Valley and surrounding area in August 2018. Recovery continues, but many businesses have reopened and continue to serve their customers and communities.

Here are the stories of two business owners, Shane Nottestad and Staci Mick-Pieper, who have worked closely with KVR over the years. Their businesses were directly hit by the flooding, and they have made great efforts to get back on track as soon as possible.

“Unbelievable damage,” is how Shane Nottestad, owner of the Gulf Zzip Stop gas station in La Farge, Wisconsin describes what he saw. The flood water reached 30.5 inches inside the store, flood water contaminated the fuel tanks, and the power outage damaged the computer and cash register system. The flooding started Monday evening with an added storm on Tuesday afternoon, but by Thursday evening they were open for business at a base level.

It’s an amazing feat that Shane credits his employees and the community members for making possible. “We had 30 people working 15 hours per day,” he said. “People just kept coming and offering to help.”

First, everything had to be removed from the store, so the mud could be scraped or hosed out. In some places the drywall and siding had to be removed, bleached, dried and eventually re-installed. Petroleum is a tricky substance, so it was hauled away and replaced followed by a State Inspection to make sure it was safe for vehicles. In total, Shane estimates a \$133,000 financial impact.

Insurance and FEMA reimbursement won’t happen, but Shane will move forward with improving his business. “Our goal is to be bigger and better this summer to start recouping the losses,” he said. A new website is in the works with a design appropriate for all mobile devices.

“The traveling public will know that we offer a lot more than gas.” Shane emphasized that he will never forget the support received during the flood and while recovering. “It was unbelievable damage followed by unimaginable support.”

BEFORE



AFTER



Small Business Recovery and Resiliency - Ontario

Staci Mick-Pieper owns and operates the Driftwood Motel in Ontario, Wisconsin. As a native of the Kickapoo Valley she is no stranger to flooding but she knew immediately this one was different.

Staci’s story is best reported in her own words:

The phone rang at 2:14 a.m. Our motel manager said, “The water is four inches from coming in the doors at the motel” We got dressed and headed down there from our house. It was about 10 minutes from the time the phone rang to the time that we got there. There was already water starting to run under the doors and coming up through the floor drains. The manager was trying to wake the guests, so he could get their car moved and get them out of the motel. We still didn’t have any idea how bad things were going to get. Until I saw it with my own eyes, I never believed how fast the water could come up. By 3:30 a.m. there was three feet of water in the entire building. It was coming in through the doors and air conditioners and there was nothing we could do about it.



The water started receding relatively quickly and we were able to get in, assess the situation and start cleaning things up. With a lot of help from people in town, including men from the nearby Amish community, we were able to have all the carpet torn out by about 2:00 p.m. the first day. Lunch was provided every day somewhere in the Village, which doesn’t sound like much, but it means more than anyone will ever know. Still, we had to tear it apart before putting it back together including tearing out drywall and insulation, removing the trim and doors, salvaging what we could then drying everything out, bleaching and putting a coat of Kilz on all exposed lumber. The flood was on the 28th of August and we hosted guests on the 25th of October.

Like many other businesses, Staci didn’t have flood insurance because the motel was not in the flood plain and FEMA refers businesses to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for low-interest loans. Taking on additional debt isn’t a great option but according to Staci, not opening was not an option either. Enthusiastically, Staci shares: “Our local bank has been great to work with and has really helped us out to get back open. We are working with SBA on financing to

complete the work. We are looking forward to summer guests enjoying all newly remodeled rooms!

Wisconsin businesses sustained over \$49 million dollars in damages during the August – September flooding. Flood water set historic records of 28.5 feet and 19.4 feet in Ontario and La Farge respectively. While FEMA provides some flood assistance to individuals, businesses are not covered. Some businesses are turning to the SBA and their banks for loan assistance.

The villages of Ontario and La Farge via elected officials and community members are planning for a better future. There will be many permanent changes that were caused by the flood, but there is also great potential for these beautiful little river towns.

Economic development professionals often say that small businesses are the drivers of the economy. If it’s the only gas station or motel in town as was the case for La Farge and Ontario, they also become the symbol for strong recovery after a disaster. Community members benefit by seeing the cleanup, restoration and thriving businesses. There is a long way to go in the flood recovery work and it is nice to know that our local small businesses will be there too. The best thing visitors to the KVR can do is support all the businesses working to recover. Thank you!



Summer Intern On Board Welcome Jonah!

Hey there y'all, Jonah Evans here! I'm the new summer intern at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. My position entails helping with everything from instructing summer campers to trail maintenance. I was born in Avalanche and grew up working on the farm. I attended grade school at Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School and graduated Youth Initiative High School in 2018. I've been in the area since I was born but I'm still constantly reminding myself of the unique flora and fauna of the Driftless. I am currently going into my second year at Northland College in Ashland, WI. I am an art major with a focus on ceramics as well as a minor in outdoor education with the hopes of one day becoming an art professor at a university. At Northland, I like to spend my time throwing pottery and playing soccer. I am also on the Dean's list and

activity evolved in the campus community. I enjoy spending most of my time outside kayaking, fishing and relaxing. When I'm not outside, I'm in my air-conditioned house staying cool and painting or reading. It is such an honor to be a part of an organization that strives for sustainability and excellence. Through the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, I can begin my long journey of teaching young minds about the beauties and complexities of the natural world around us.



Enforcement & Safety on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve

by Jason Leis, Property Manager - Police Officer

Kickapoo Valley Reserve (KVR) Enforcement Officers work daily to assist visitors of the KVR. To ensure your next visit is everything you hoped for, here are a few friendly reminders:

- A day or annual permit is required for using the trails and parking at the canoe landings. Hunting and fishing excluded.
- Horse & bike must stay on designated trails.
- No glass is allowed on the Kickapoo River. Fines are steep for possessing glass and the rule is strictly enforced. No one wants to get cut from broken glass while enjoying the beautiful river.
- State Law requires wearable Personal Flootation Devices (PFDs) be available for each person. Paddlers under 13 years old must wear a PFD.
- At first signs of severe weather, seek shelter and high ground. Dangerous river conditions can develop rapidly during and after heavy rains. We encourage all users to sign up for NIXLE (see below) to receive local emergency updates and information.

The KVR will be hosting a swift water rescue training this summer for KVR Enforcement Officers, and local emergency personnel. The purpose of this training is to heighten the safety and skill level of those involved in emergency calls on the Kickapoo River. Be sure to thank our local emergency services any chance you get for their continued dedication to the safety and well being of all of us.

Dark Skies at Kickapoo Valley Reserve



Photo courtesy of Stephen Deutsch

Dark Sky Reserves are locations known for outstanding views of the night sky. The Kickapoo Valley Reserve and Wildcat Mountain State Park are proposed Dark Sky Reserves. Wildcat has been known for years for fantastic night sky viewing. There are six recognized Dark Sky Reserves in North America today.

2019 is the 50th Anniversary of the First Moon Landing. July 7th 8-10pm at Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center

Join us for a moon gaze to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Apollo 11 landing on the Moon. NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador John Heasley will share an indoor presentation "Giant Steps". Hear the story of how humans journeyed to another world and what they found there. Families can sit back and enjoy as John provides an educational and interactive presentation all about 1969 Apollo Space Landing. After sunset, we'll head outside where KVR astro-educators will have a telescope and binoculars set up for you to view the Sun rising on the Sea of Tranquility just as it did when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walked there a half century ago. Meet at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve Visitor Center. Free and open to the public. No registration is required.



Trail Talk by Jackie Yocum, KVR Recreation Tech

Summer has finally rolled in. Natural surface trails were delayed in opening this spring due to wet conditions. Trails officially opened on June 6th for the season. The policy is when we receive an inch or more of rain in one weather event, natural surface trails will close to allow drying time before use. Users are encouraged to check our website and/or Facebook page for the most current trail status.

If you have been out on the trails, you will notice new wet spots along the way. An exceptionally wet May has lead to saturated soils and new seeps have developed in some places. The crew will be working on armoring (hardening the trail tread with rock) these new wet spots. To lessen impact of use of the wet areas, please refrain from by-passing them. The wider the problem spots get, the more work, time and material it takes the crew to repair. User cooperation is always appreciated.

Old 131 Trail north of the Ho-Chunk Covered Bridge near Indian Creek Trail to



Rockton has undergone a face lift. New pavement in this section has been completed and side trail work is in process. This section of Old 131 was closed during the construction process and is now reopened. Wet conditions delayed completion of the project, and we appreciated everyone's patience while we worked toward "doing it right."

Prior to the flood in August of 2018, the KVR Crew completed a reroute project on the West Ridge Trail. A one mile reroute of the current West Ridge Trail is open and ready for users to explore. The newly installed trail now follows parameters of sustainability that we use at the KVR, and is

designated as a shared use trail. Shared use means Horse, Hike and Bike.

Trail maintenance is in full swing as conditions allow. The KVR Crew will be out on the trails removing berms and armoring seeps. Be sure to thank the crew when you see them. They work hard for your enjoyment. As always, we ask users to let us know of any problem spots found

HELP KEEP THE KICKAPOO RIVER CLEAN!

**Padder
Pick Up**

along the trails.

The Kickapoo River Water Trail has seen many hours of work already this summer season. Countless volunteers, the KVR Crew and loggers have spent hours removing flood debris, down trees, log jams, resurfacing, repairing and cleaning canoe landing parking areas and landings. The destruction of the flood of August 2018 has left us all on high alert and we respect the river that much more. Safety on the trails, including the Kickapoo River Water Trail is at the forefront in our minds. If you are recreating in the KVR or on the Kickapoo River, we encourage you to sign up for NIXLE, our local emergency management alert system.

Enjoy summer in the Kickapoo Valley and "Get Outside!"



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